



Teleconference Summary: Reducing Truancy and Improving Attendance

In April 2007, a number of SS/HS grantees and National Center staff participated in a teleconference, titled “Every Day, Every Child – On Time: A Strategy for Reducing Truancy & Improving Attendance.” Among the important points made by participants were the following:

- If you frame the issue as attendance improvement, rather than truancy prevention, you can help increase parent involvement.
- Parent involvement is essential. Parents should be educated about the importance of school attendance and attendance policies—and informed when their children are truant.
- Although truancy is a greater problem in middle and high schools, it is important to begin setting school and community norms about attendance in elementary schools.
- Tardiness is related to truancy. Establishing a strict “no tardiness” policy and conducting “tardy sweeps” of the hallways after the bell rings set attendance norms, lessen class disruption, increase teaching time, and reduce fighting and misbehavior in the halls.
- In states in which educational funding is attached to attendance, reducing truancy can increase money coming into the school district.
- Accurate record-keeping is an essential component of an effective truancy reduction program. Such programs may initially result in an apparent increase in truancy because of better record-keeping.
- An effective truancy reduction program includes components designed to promote attendance among all students as well as interventions designed for students in need of greater attention and support.
- It is more effective to channel truant students in need of adjudication to a dedicated truancy court than to refer these cases to judges who may not be educated in truancy and truancy prevention.

To listen to a recording of this teleconference and/or view PowerPoint slides and other materials used during the event, click here:

http://www.promoteprevent.org/events/center_events/index.html#Truancy

For an overview of truancy prevention, see the National Center’s Truancy Prevention Brief at

http://www.promoteprevent.org/publications/center_briefs/Truancy_Prevention_Brief.pdf.

For additional resources on truancy prevention, see the National Center’s Truancy Prevention Resource page, which is located

http://www.promoteprevent.org/resources/resource_pages/program_functions/truancy_prevention.htm.